

Return to Use Initiative

2007 Demonstration Project

White Farm Equipment Company Dump:

Charles City, Iowa

THE SITE: The White Farm Equipment Company Dump site occupies approximately 20 acres along the northern border of Charles City, Iowa. The site is located in an old sand and gravel pit that is bordered by low-lying areas, wetlands, and farmland. Tractors and other farm equipment have been manufactured near the site since the early 1900s. Starting in the 1920s, White Farm Equipment Company's manufacturing operations generated foundry sand, sludges, and baghouse dust. Beginning in 1971, the plant intermittently disposed of foundry sands, baghouse dust, and other industrial wastes at the site. Approximately 650,000 cubic yards of these wastes were disposed of on site. As a result, heavy metals and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) contaminated ground water, while sediments, soil, and surface water were polluted with heavy metals. In a remedy decision issued in 1990, EPA chose to cap the soil and monitor ground water. Construction of the cap was completed in 1995 and the site was deleted from the National Priorities List in October 2000. Five-Year Reviews conducted in 1999 and 2004 have confirmed that the remedy remains protective of human health and the environment.

THE OPPORTUNITY: The site owner is interested in reusing the White Farm site and is considering ecological and agricultural reuse options. According to the site owner, deer and other wildlife are frequently seen inside the fence, grazing on the cap and using the existing flora for habitat. Nearby residents have also placed multiple bird houses next to the site to attract waterfowl to the adjacent wetland area. The owner has also mentioned using the site as a grazing area for livestock or horses.

THE BARRIERS: Prior to implementing any type of reuse at the site, EPA needs to determine that the reuse will not impair or damage the site's remedy. Local residents also need reassurance that the site is safe to reuse. An institutional control to prohibit digging into the soil and the protective cap would need to be put in place before reuse begins.

THE SOLUTION: U.S. EPA is in the process of drafting a Ready for Reuse (RfR) Determination for the site. The RfR determination is an environmental status report that will document the site's condition, explain which uses the site can safely support, and affirm that the site is safe to reuse so long as the remedy remains protective of human health and the environment.

THE SITE NOW: The site, which sits on the outskirts of town, is currently unoccupied. According to the latest Five-Year Review the cap is in excellent



Barriers:

Institutional controls needed to protect the remedy; Superfund site stigma and uncertainty about appropriate reuse options

Solution:

RfR Determination to act as informational institutional control until other institutional controls are implemented



Before:

Former foundry site, lying vacant with capped landfill and ongoing ground water monitoring, and wetland areas

After:

Open space with potential for ecological and agricultural reuse

shape. The site is listed on the State of Iowa Registry of Hazardous Waste or Hazardous Substances Disposal Sites and is classified as "Requires Continued Maintenance, Site Properly Closed." Once issued, the RfR Determination will serve as an informational institutional control until other institutional controls can be implemented.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Shelley Brodie, Remedial Project Manager, at (913) 551-7706 or brodie.shelley@epa.gov; or Tonya Howell, Region 7 Superfund Redevelopment Coordinator, at (913) 551-7589 or howell.tonya@epa.gov.



Swans on the wetlands adjacent to the White Farm Equipment Company Dump site. The site is the fenced area located in the background.